Action taken against journals, dailies, weeklies and monthlies.

Q.—43. Sri K. S. VASAN (Kolar Gold Fields).—

Will the Government be pleased to state :—

(*a*) the names of journals, dailies, weeklies and monthlies, against which they have taken action since January 1952 ;

(*b*) the nature of action taken ;

(*c*) the circumstances under which action has been taken against "KIDI" and the number of cases launched against it ?

A.—Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO (Minister for Law and Education).—

(*a*) (1) Mysore Patrike (Daily).
(2) Kidi (Weekly).
(3) Satya (Daily).
(4) Kamakala (Monthly).

(*b*) Action has been taken under Section 7 of the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act, 1951, against the Publishers of the Papers 1 to 3 referred to above and under Section 4 of the said Act, against the keepers of the concerned printing presses for having printed and published scurrilous matter of the nature described in Section 3 (vi) of the said Act.

(*c*) Altogether 12 cases have been filed against the Paper 'KIDI', seven against the Publisher of the paper and five against the keeper of the Press.

These cases are still pending and the matter is *sub judice*. No further information can be furnished on the subject.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—With reference to answer (*a*), may I know whether the list given there is up-to-date ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I believe so.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Is not 'Kidi' a widely read popular Kannada Paper ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—As I have already said, the cases relating to this paper are *sub judice*. And about its popularity, it is a matter of opinion.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Is it not a fact that 'Kidi' is an uncompromising critic of parties and policies ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It is a matter of opinion.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Have the Government consulted the Press Advisory Committee before taking action against these papers ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—No.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Is it not necessary to consult the Press Advisory Committee before taking action against any Paper under the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It is not considered necessary in this case.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Will these cases, now pending before the Court, be referred to the Press Advisory Committee for their opinion ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Opinion regarding what ?

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Whether any action taken against this paper is really right ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—No, Sir.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Has not action been taken against one Kannada paper 'Aruna' which is being published in Mysore ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I want notice for that.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—May I ask what is the total number of periodicals against which action has been taken under the Act referred to here in the answer as well as under other Acts ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—The question here was about the action taken against the Dailies, Weeklies, etc., since January 1952. That has been answered.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—That is there. But reference has been made to the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act, 1951 in the answer. I was asking whether my Hon'ble friend could tell me if any action has been taken against other periodicals, if any, under any other law ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I want notice for that.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Sir, may I know whether the Government have any information as to the number of cases in which similar action has been taken against newspapers and journals in our neighbouring State?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—We have no information.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Are Government aware that the number of cases in which action has been taken by our Government under the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act, is so large that particular kinds of comments have appeared on the matter in periodicals of other States? Has it come to the notice of the Government?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—No.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—May I know what is the total number of cases in which action has been contemplated against these papers?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I am unable to answer at this stage.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—May I know, Sir, whether any cases are still under consideration of Government with regard to the taking of action under this Act?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Yes, there are.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—May I know how many?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I am not able to answer that question as yet.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—Why is the Hon'ble Minister unable to answer that question?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Because it has not resulted in action. It is only under contemplation. Many things are under contemplation.

Sri K. S. VASAN.—I was intending to know information about cases that are under contemplation. Cannot the Government give even this information to this House?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—At this stage, I cannot answer. If sufficient notice is given, I can collect and give the information.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Is not the Press Advisory Committee in existence now?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I do not think it is in existence. I am not aware of that.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Let me tell you, it is in existence. What are the functions and duties of the Press Advisory Committee?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It does not arise from this question.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Before any action was taken against any paper, was it not the practice to place that matter before that Committee and ask its opinion?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It is only a hypothetical question. The nature of cases in which they used to be consulted is different.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—If any action was to be taken against any Paper, was it not the practice and convention to place that matter before the Press Advisory Committee and seek their opinion before action was taken?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Yes, under the Old Press Act they used to be consulted for a specific purpose.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Can you tell the reason why these matters were not placed before the Press Advisory Committee?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I have answered that. It was felt not necessary.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Who advised the Government to launch these cases? Was any legal opinion taken?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Yes.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Is it the policy of the Government

to file cases against such Papers that oppose the policy of the Government ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Not at all.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—How many more cases are under the consideration of the Government to be filed ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—That was already answered.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Has any action been taken against *Kamakala* and what is the nature of the case pending against this Monthly ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—As I have said, it is *sub judice*.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—How many cases have been filed against this ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I want notice.

Sri J. MOHAMED IMAM.—Are the Government aware that criticisms of *Kidi* are more or less diverted against the Party and persons .....

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—As I said, it is a matter of opinion.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—Are the Government aware of the fact that the Press Advisory Committee, if it exists, has not met for over 1½ years ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Yes, it has not met for a long time.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—Are the Government also aware of the fact that on account of the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act coming into existence, the members of the Press Advisory Committees in various States resigned ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It does not arise from this question.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—I would like to know if the Government can definitely state whether the Press Advisory Committee exists or not ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I want notice for that.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—I would like to know why the answers are given in regard to the Press Advisory Committee if the Government were not sure of the fact that the Committee existed or not.

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I have not followed the question.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—Just now a few minutes back, the Law Minister was pleased to answer the question with regard to the advice that was taken or was not taken with regard to the action taken against these Papers, from the Press Advisory Committee. I am asking whether the Government did not make sure in its own mind whether the Press Advisory Committee existed or not, because now the answer is given that after taking legal opinion it was found sufficient to launch a case.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question was put whether the Press Advisory Committee was consulted in the matter. The Law Minister was pleased to say that it was not consulted.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—I want to know exactly why that answer was given when it was not known definitely whether the Press Advisory Committee existed or not. Now I want to know definitely whether the Press Advisory Committee exists or not.

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—The desirability or necessity was never felt at all. Hence the issue does not arise.

Sri P. R. RAMAIYA.—The question is whether it exists or not.

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I want notice. I have already said about it.

Sri K. PUTTASWAMY.—What is the matter to which objection has been taken ?

Mr. SPEAKER.—That is *sub judice*.